



Dear Senator **Richard Burr**,

As the **Interlining Vice President** of **Freudenberg Nonwovens LP** company which employs **450** employees in **North Carolina**, I am writing to you today to strongly urge your support of H.R. 6142, the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE) Act of 2006 which would provide modest trade preferences to Haiti – the poorest and only least developed country (LDC) in our hemisphere. It is **my** understanding that efforts are underway to craft a trade package of legislation during the lame duck session of Congress beginning December 4th. I implore you to insist H.R. 6142 is part of that package.

Notwithstanding the obvious moral reasons for passing this bill, HOPE will be good for **North Carolina** because it will allow our business to increase sales of **Nonwovens Interlining for apparel applications** to CINTAS which uses Haiti as an apparel assembly point. However, if HOPE does not pass, CINTAS will almost certainly follow the exodus of apparel makers who have already left Haiti for Asia. Senator **Burr**, these sewing jobs will not come back to the United States – instead they will go to Asia and so will affect **Nonwovens production in North Carolina**. Therefore, not only will failing to pass HOPE harm Haiti, it may put in jeopardy our business in **Durham North Carolina**.

Assertions that HOPE will turn Haiti into a center for transshipment are simply false. There has never been a transshipment problem in Haiti and the Haitian government has repeatedly signaled its willingness to accept whatever safeguards U.S. Customs feels are appropriate. The fact is the apparel sector in Haiti has shrunk from 100,000 workers to 12,000 and will disappear completely if nothing is done to make its apparel sector competitive with Asia. Moreover, after over a decade of political unrest, Haiti finally has a democratically elected President who has made HOPE an important part of his platform. Passage of HOPE would be a tangible sign that the United States cares about our poorest neighbors.

The time to help Haiti is now – and in doing so you can also help ensure the workers in **my** business will remain employed.

Sincerely,



Francisco Ros



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